/253 cont./

121 We shall indicate here the primitive manifestations of their culture (Persõnlichkeitkultur), meaning by this expression what these forest dwellers exhibit from their own culture and not received from the white, and which is easily discovered from living with them.

• 212 /254/ 1. Writing.

A question that immediately arises is whether these tribes know how to write. One can answer that at present they do not [797] know or use any kind of writing (2).

2. With the exception, naturally, of those who have passed through the Mission schools. One notices this peculiarity: they learn how to write the Portuguese language with some facility, but they write Tukano with difficulty. Actually the letters of the Latin alphabet, which we use and such as we pronounce in Portuguese, do not reproduce all the sounds of the Tukano language.

172 532 It is a question open to discussion as to whether those signs that are found on many stones of the Rio Negro and tributaries, that is, the petroglyphs or itacoatiaras (õxtã ohoritirí-pa in Tukano), are a writing of spoken language, or at least ciphered language (of which idiom? of which tribe? in which era?); or are only designs, perhaps stylized (sportive signs /Port. sinais lúdicos/) (3).

3. About the itacoatiaras, their antiquity and their interpretation, cf. the notable work by Bernardo da Silva Ramos, Inscrições e tradições da América pré-histórica /Inscriptions and traditions of Prehistoric America/. Koch Grünberg, going up the river Curicuriari (tributary of the right bank of the Rio Negro), on February 14, 1904, found on a stone designs with the figures